

# Patron Candidate's Address and Platform.

1896.

## TO THE ELECTORS Of the Electoral Division of Manitou.

GENTLEMEN—

In soliciting your support in the present Provincial contest, it becomes necessary for me to define clearly my position on the issues of the day, and to state briefly some reasons for the election, in this constituency, of an independent candidate representing Patron and Prohibition principles.

My position on the School Question is that of uncompromising opposition to any and all attempts towards breaking up our present public school system, or adopting any modification of the Act of 1890 that would establish separate or sectarian schools. I believe that not only are the people of this Province overwhelmingly in favor of national schools but that a majority of our Roman Catholic fellow citizens also prefer that their children should receive the instruction given in the common schools. While only anxious to see justice done and prepared to treat the claims of the smallest minority with full consideration, I shall resist to the utmost any attempt on the part of the Dominion Government to coerce the people of this Province into submission to the wishes of any church or party.

The Platform of the Patrons on the School Question is as follows: "Maintenance of the principle of a uniform system of public schools. We stand unalterably opposed to any appropriation of public monies for sectarian purposes. We declare that only by the united support of such public schools can we hope to become and remain a homogeneous and harmonious people."

The position of the Provincial Conservative party, as set forth in the amendment offered by Messrs. O'Malley and Kellett during the last session of the Legislature, is practically in favor of separate schools, and therefore this party is not to be trusted on this question. On the other hand, I do not believe in the Liberal party making capital out of this question either in Dominion or Provincial politics. The action of the Government, in springing the election on at this time, has every appearance of an attempt to secure a party advantage rather than a settlement of this question, the expectation being to obtain another lease of power on a snap verdict, and also to assist the Liberal party in the coming Dominion struggle. Whether this be so or not it is certainly true that the suddenness with which the election has been brought on is calculated to prevent a calm and unprejudiced verdict, and to divert attention from other important questions.

In his address to the electors, Mr. Greenway makes the most of the School question as the "main issue" upon which the people are to pronounce. We see no reason why this question should completely overshadow all others. While firm in our stand on the School question, we submit that there are other matters of importance which should not be overlooked in this contest. In our determination to uphold Provincial Rights we must not overlook Provincial Wrongs from which we are suffering. One of the greatest of these wrongs is the financial burden under which

we labor. Our Province is already heavily laden with debt, which is increasing, through the unwise expenditure of the Local Legislature in certain directions. We therefore advocate "rigid economy in every department of the public service," and "general reduction in the machinery of government."

In reference to Prohibition our position is clear and satisfactory to all independent prohibitionists. Not only are my personal convictions strong on this subject, but as an organization we are fully committed to the overthrow of the liquor traffic. We stand for "the enactment and enforcement of a prohibitory law as speedily as possible. In the meantime the restriction of the liquor traffic to the full extent of the power of the Legislature." Mr. Greenway claims that in this matter his government "have pursued a consistent course throughout." A review, however, of the legislation of the last four years reveals the hollowness of the professions of the Greenway government on the temperance question. A leading prohibitionist, whose sympathies have heretofore been with the Liberal party, has recently said: "The time has come when even the most 'liberal'-minded advocate of our cause is compelled to confess sore disappointment in his hopes of temperance legislation from the Liberal Government of this Province. In support of this it is only necessary to point out that since the plebiscite vote of 1892, and the Attorney-General's pledge of more stringent legislation until the question of jurisdiction was settled, practically nothing has been done to make good this pledge. On the contrary, the record of the present government, as appears by legislation, is in the opposite direction. Several changes have been made in the license law, which indicate a desire to comply with the wishes of the liquor party, while numerous requests from the temperance people have been ignored. To say, therefore, that Hon. Clifford Sifton and his Government have broken faith with the temperance people of Manitoba, is to put it mildly."

It is well known that for years the two old parties have been playing fast and loose with this question, and it remained for the Patrons to draw the line and come out squarely on the side of right. Temperance people have now, for the first time, an opportunity of voting their convictions in a general election, and showing that principle is more to them than party.

There are other matters dealt with in our platform to which I would also call attention. We propose to do away with the acceptance of railway passes by members of parliament, which is simply a species of bribery. We would abolish the present expensive and partisan method of preparing the voters' lists, and also the unjust gerrymandering system. Simplification of the laws, reduction in freight charges and excessive rates of interest, and the development of our agricultural industries would receive our special attention. In our platform are found the very measures which meet the requirements of this province to-day. The farmers of Manitoba have here an opportunity of marking their ballots in their own interests, which I believe are the true interests of the country.

Let me say, however, that the present independent movement is not merely a patron or farmers or prohibition demonstration but a

general uprising on the part of the people all along the line to rid our country of corrupt party rule. Old party politics have simply degenerated into a scramble for office, one party fighting to keep in, and the other to get in. The result has been that the welfare of the country has been sacrificed to the interest of Criticism or Toryism. Is it not high time that this should come to an end and that these two old parties should be buried under a shower of independent ballots? I have cut loose from the Liberal party for the same reason that others have abandoned the Conservative party. We have come out of these old parties that we may unite on the sound principle of legislating for the masses rather than the classes. For the same reason we invite you to lay aside the old party feeling and vote with us on January 15.

Faithfully yours,

**B. SWANSON:**

Manitou, Jan. 2, 1896.

## PATRON PROVINCIAL PLATFORM

1. Maintenance of the principle of a uniform system of public schools.

Note—We stand utterly opposed to any appropriation of public monies for sectarian purposes. We declare that only by united support of public schools can we hope to become and remain a homogeneous and harmonious people.

2. Purity and independence of parliament.

Note—No member of Parliament to receive any fees or emoluments other than his seasonal indemnity, nor to accept a railway pass or other favor that would likely influence his judgment in protecting the interests of the people.

3. Agriculture being Manitoba's principal industry, should have the first care of the legislature.

4. Rigid economy in every department of the public service.

5. Simplification of the laws and the general reduction in the machinery of government.

6. Preparation of voter's lists by municipal officers.

7. Conformity of electoral districts to municipal boundaries, as constituted for municipal purposes so far as the principle of representation by population will permit.

Note—Anti-gerrymander.

8—Equal suffrage.

Note—No distinction in citizenship should be made on account of sex, and we believe the franchise should be extended to women on the same terms as to men.

9. Prohibition of the liquor traffic to the full extent of the jurisdiction of the local parliament.

Note—The enactment and enforcement of a law prohibiting the importation, manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes, as speedily as possible. In the meantime the restriction of the liquor traffic to the full extent of the power of the legislature.

10. The rigid enforcement of all laws, especially those relating to public morality.

11. Government assistance to colonization and other railroads so far as the revenues of the province will warrant.

Note—This would especially apply to Lake Dauphin and other districts similarly situated, also to a completed line to Hudson's Bay if feasible.

12. Candidates to be selected for ability, integrity and independence, and must pledge themselves to support the principles expressed in this platform.